

HIV and People Who Inject Drugs



People who inject drugs (PWID) are at high risk for getting HIV if they use needles, syringes, or other injection equipment—for example, cookers—that someone with HIV has used.

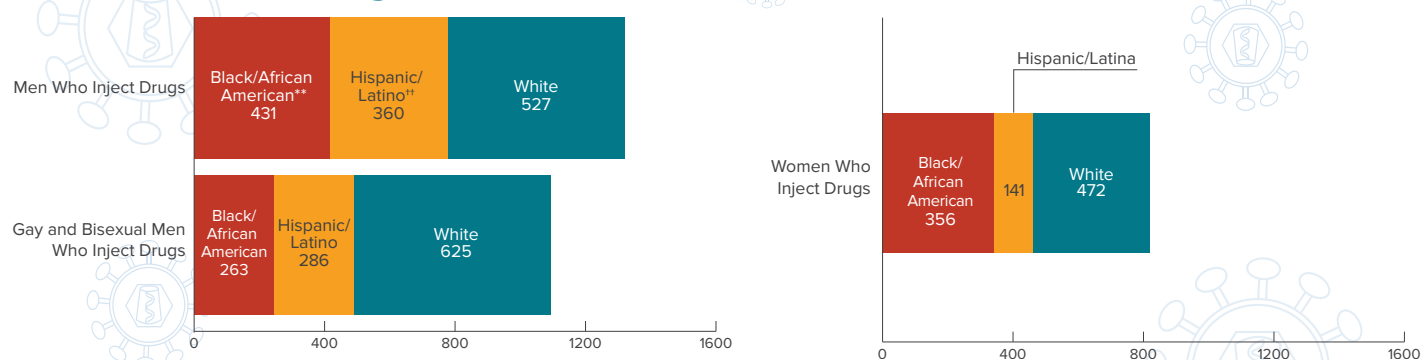
OF THE 38,739 HIV DIAGNOSES IN THE US AND DEPENDENT AREAS* IN 2017:

1 IN 10 (3,641) WERE AMONG PWID

2,625 WERE AMONG MEN WHO INJECT DRUGS†

1,016 WERE AMONG WOMEN WHO INJECT DRUGS

New HIV Diagnoses Among People Who Inject Drugs in the US and Dependent Areas, 2017



This chart does not include subpopulations representing 2% or less of all PWID who received an HIV diagnosis in 2017.

From 2010 to 2016, HIV diagnoses decreased 31% among PWID overall.†† But trends varied by race/ethnicity.

PWID overall: down 31%

By race/ethnicity:

Black/African American: down 52%

Hispanic/Latino: down 30%

White: remained stable

* American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the Republic of Palau, and the US Virgin Islands.

† Includes infections attributed to male-to-male sexual contact *and* injection drug use (men who reported both risk factors).

** Black refers to people having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa, including immigrants from the Caribbean, and South and Latin America. African American is a term often used for Americans of African descent with ancestry in North America. Individuals may self-identify as either, both, or choose another identity altogether.

†† Hispanics/Latinos can be of any race.

‡ In 50 states and the District of Columbia.

National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention

Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention



Around 1.1 million people have HIV in the US.[‡] People with HIV need to know their HIV status so they can take medicine to treat HIV. Taking HIV medicine as prescribed can make the level of virus in their body very low (called viral suppression) or even undetectable.



People with HIV who take HIV medicine as prescribed and get and keep an undetectable viral load (or stay virally suppressed) have effectively no risk of transmitting HIV to their HIV-negative sexual partners.

Keeping an undetectable viral load likely reduces the risk of transmitting HIV through shared syringes or other injection equipment. But we don't know how much it reduces the risk.



At the end of 2016, an estimated **189,600 PWID** had HIV.[‡] Of these, **93%** knew they had the virus.

What places some PWID at higher risk?

Opioid Crisis



Prescription opioid and heroin crisis in nonurban areas leading to more people injecting and new populations being at risk. These areas have limited access to HIV services and substance use disorder treatment.

Socioeconomic Factors



Social and economic factors like homelessness or not having health insurance. These make it harder for some PWID to access HIV services.

Lack of Sterile Equipment



Low access to sterile injection equipment in the US.

Lack of Treatment



Lack of access to treatment for drug addiction or substance use disorder, including medication-assisted treatment (MAT).

Other Diseases



Blood-borne diseases such as viral hepatitis and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Having another STD can greatly increase the chance of getting or transmitting HIV through sex.

How is CDC making a difference?



Collecting and analyzing data and monitoring HIV trends.



Supporting responses for HIV outbreaks traced to injection drug use.



Conducting prevention research and providing guidance to those working in HIV prevention.



Providing guidance and technical assistance to programs on how CDC funding supports implementation of syringe service programs.

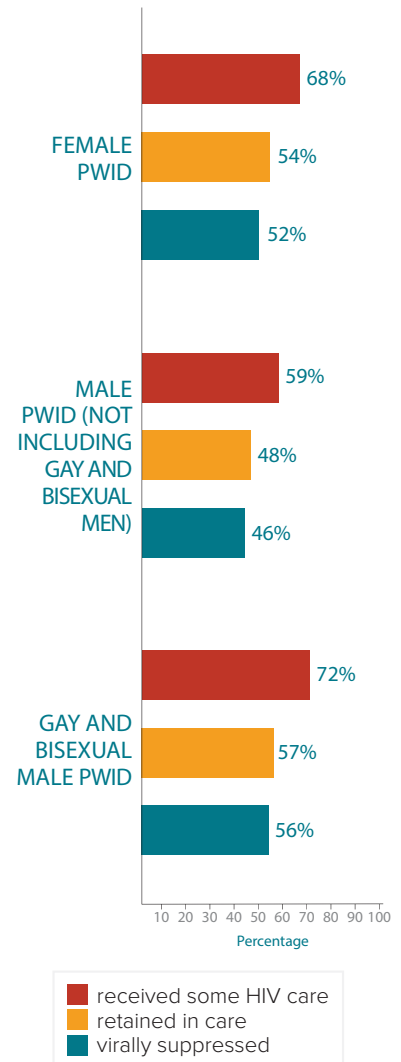


Supporting health departments and community-based organizations by funding HIV prevention work and providing technical assistance.



Promoting testing, prevention, and treatment through the *Let's Stop HIV Together* campaign.

HIV Care for PWID With HIV (2015)[‡]



Reduce Your Risk



Not having sex



Using condoms



Not sharing syringes



Taking medicine to prevent or treat HIV



HIV IS A VIRUS THAT ATTACKS THE BODY'S IMMUNE SYSTEM.

It is usually spread by anal or vaginal sex or sharing syringes with a person who has HIV. The only way to know you have HIV is to be tested. Everyone aged 13-64 should be tested at least once, and people at high risk should be tested at least once a year. Ask your doctor, or visit gettested.cdc.gov to find a testing site. Without treatment, HIV can make a person very sick or may even cause death. If you have HIV, start treatment as soon as possible to stay healthy and help protect your partners.

For More Information

Call 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
Visit www.cdc.gov/hiv